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Forward Together Update, December 1, 2021

University of Northern Iowa

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Forward Together Update

Today, the [CDC](#) announced that the Omicron Variant of Concern has been detected in the United States, which was confirmed by the California and San Francisco Departments of Public Health. Currently there are no known cases in the State of Iowa.

Last week the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) classified the new Omicron variant (B.1.1.529) as a variant of concern due to its large number of mutations present, which can alter the behavior of the Covid-19 virus. The [CDC](#) recently issued a statement on Omicron and expects to learn more about this new variant in the coming weeks. In the interim, the CDC has encouraged Americans to follow [commonly known prevention strategies](#) such as getting vaccinated and monitoring your health.

BOOST your knowledge about the COVID-19 booster!

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention now recommends individuals over the age of 18 receive a booster dose vaccine and allows for mix and match dosing for booster shots.

Are you looking for information about the COVID-19 booster including how to choose your booster shot, what to expect during and after your booster appointment, and data supporting the need for a booster? The [CDC's COVID-19 Vaccine Booster page](#) contains all of this information plus frequently asked questions. The CDC notes "the emergence of the Omicron variant further emphasizes the importance of vaccination, boosters, and prevention efforts needed to protect against COVID-19."

Do you have questions about common myths and rumors surrounding COVID-19 vaccines? The [CDC's Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines page](#) busts some of the common myths surrounding COVID-19 vaccines including those related to mRNA, microchips, and electromagnetic fields.

And remember, if you have questions regarding COVID-19, or other health-related issues, speak with your healthcare provider. The Student Health Clinic staff is happy to answer any questions students, faculty or staff may have regarding COVID-19, the Student Health Clinic's Covid-19 phone line is (319)273-2100.

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Booster and Vaccine Clinics

The UNI Student Health Clinic will host Pfizer-BioNTech **COVID-19 booster vaccine** on-campus clinics for students, faculty, and staff on **Thursday, December 2 from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon**.

Ongoing vaccine clinics are also available on Thursdays from 1:00-3:00 p.m. and Fridays from 9:00- 11:00 a.m. throughout the semester.

All of these clinics are by appointment only. You must call the UNI Student Health Clinic Covid-19 phone line at (319) 273-2100 to schedule an appointment. No walk in appointments are available.

Boosters and vaccines are also available from local healthcare providers or pharmacies. If you are looking for a vaccine off-campus, search [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you.

Vaccination remains the best way to protect yourself, reduce the spread of the virus, and help prevent new variants from emerging.

Voluntary Vaccine Verification Reminder

Employees (faculty, staff, graduate assistants and student employees) can utilize the [Panther Health Survey](#) to voluntarily submit documentation of having received a COVID-19 vaccine or voluntarily submit a request for a waiver or accommodation as to any potential/future COVID-19 vaccination requirement. See Forward Together's [Vaccine Verification FAQs](#) for more information.

Panther Health Survey

The university is continuing to use the [Panther Health Survey](#) to assist those who are:

- Experiencing [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 (regardless of vaccination status);
- Have been exposed to COVID-19 and are unvaccinated (individuals who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine after an exposure unless they have [symptoms](#)); or
- Unable to report to campus for class, work, or other assignments due to COVID-19.

If you fall into any of these categories please complete the survey as it helps provide relevant campus support services to those impacted by COVID-19, supports our cleaning and disinfecting efforts, and allows students to receive alternative class

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assignments, which are available for individual students who are unable to attend class due to COVID-related health issues.

If you have a question, please visit forwardtogether.uni.edu or email it to forwardtogether@uni.edu. Thanks for all that you do to keep yourself, your family and the Panther community safe.

Stay Well,

John Vallentine,
Associate Provost for Faculty

Joseph Rayzor,
Director of Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety